



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

Kaminsky, Griffin and Miller Urge Lawrence, Hewlett-Woodmere and West Hempstead School Districts To Move Date of 2021 Budget and Board Elections

TODD KAMINSKY September 10, 2020

(Rockville Centre, NY) -- Today, Senator Todd Kaminsky, Assemblymember Judy Griffin and Assemblymember Melissa Miller wrote to the superintendents and school boards of the Lawrence, Hewlett-Woodmere and West Hempstead School Districts urging them to change the date of their scheduled 2021 elections for school budgets and school board members in recognition of the holiday of Shavuot.

This scheduling conflict creates a barrier for Jewish New Yorkers to vote in their district's elections and, as such, Senator Kaminsky and Assemblymembers Griffin and Miller are urging each district to begin the process of changing their election date to May 11, 2011 to accommodate religious observance of the holiday. As each of these districts represents large Jewish populations, lawfully moving the date of the election is critical in ensuring that all voters have equal access to the polls.

The full letter to the Lawrence, Hewlett-Woodmere and West Hempstead School Districts can be read below:

We are writing to request that your school district moves next year's school budget and school board election in recognition of Shavuot. Currently, school boards present proposed school budgets for the upcoming school year for voter approval and elect the local school board members every year on the third

Tuesday of May. In 2021, that date falls on the second day of the holiday of Shavuot. This conflict will make it difficult or impossible for many Jewish New Yorkers to vote since they have to decide between their civic or religious duties.

We are therefore asking the school board to request the date of the election and school budget approval be changed to the second Tuesday in May – May 11, 2021. Current education law (Education Law §§1906, 2002, 2022, and 2601-a) allows school boards to request the election and budget vote be changed to the second Tuesday in May if there is a conflict with religious observances. Such a request must be made and certified by the Commissioner of Education no later than March 1st, 2021.

With the current statutory required date falling on Shavuot, it is only reasonable for the school district, which represents a large Jewish population, to change the day to accommodate more people. Please feel free to reach out to our offices with any questions or any assistance in requesting the change be certified by the Commissioner of Education. We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

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